

# **Online Voters' Guide Statements**

## **Offices Eligible to Submit a Statement**

To provide consistency and eliminate duplication of work, the statement submitted to the Office of the Secretary of State will be displayed on the Mason County Auditor's Office Elections Department's Online Voters' Guide for any candidate required to file his or her Declaration of Candidacy with the Office of the Secretary of State and for any candidate required to file with the County Auditor, but qualified to participate in the printed Voters' Pamphlet produced by the Office of the Secretary of State. A second statement is not required to be submitted to the Mason County Elections Department and will not be accepted for those positions including President, Vice-President, United States Senator, United States Representative, all Statewide Offices, State Representative, State Senator, Superior Court Judge, Court of Appeals Judge, and Supreme Court Justice.

All other offices may submit a statement to the Mason County Auditor's Office Elections Department to be published in the Online Voters' Guide.

## **Statement Requirements**

Candidate statements must be submitted in an electronic format from a standard word processing program submitted on CD or emailed to [amberc@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:amberc@co.mason.wa.us).

In addition, the following requirements must be met.

- ❑ The name, address and telephone number of the candidate submitting the statement must appear at the top of each page of the statement (not to be counted against the word limit).
- ❑ All statements shall be without tables, lists, graphs, or other material requiring multiple indentations.
- ❑ Words that are underlined, in italics, or all in upper case letters will be changed to normal printing.

## **Statement Length**

**Statements submitted for publication in the Online Voters' Guide shall be limited to one hundred and fifty (150) words or less.**

If the statement exceeds the 150-word limit, the candidate will be notified by telephone. The candidate will have until the close of the next business day (4:30 p.m.) to submit a new statement within the 150-word limit.

If the candidate does not submit a new statement meeting the 150-word limit, all words in excess of 150 will be omitted. If such a deletion creates an incomplete sentence, that incomplete sentence will also be omitted.

### **Editing**

The Election Department staff will not make any changes or corrections to a candidate statement and does not assume any responsibility for errors that result from inaccuracies in the original statement submitted by the candidate.

### **Content**

By law, the County Auditor is required to reject any statement containing obscene, vulgar, profane, scandalous, libelous or defamatory matter, or language which in any way cites, counsels, promotes or advocates hatred, abuse, violence and/or hostility toward, or which tends to cause ridicule or shame upon any person or group of persons by reason of sex, race, color, religion or manner of worship or any language or matter the circulation of which is prohibited by Federal law.

### **Appeal of Rejected Statements**

Candidates who have any portion of their statement rejected will be notified in writing and by telephone. The candidate will have until 4:30 p.m., three days following the notification by telephone to appeal the rejection. Appeals will be made to the County Auditor.

The County Auditor shall render a decision within two business days of the appeal and such decision to accept or reject the statement or portion of the statement shall be final. A second decision to reject is final due to time limitations and only the portion of the statement, if any, which has not been rejected, will be used.

### **Publication**

Candidate statements shall appear in the order they will appear on the ballot. The following statement shall be printed at the top of each page where candidate statements appear: **"These statements are submitted by the candidates and are not checked for accuracy by any government agency."** For candidates who do not submit a statement, their name, position they are running for, and term will appear with the phrase **"No Statement Submitted."** The statements will appear online at least twenty-five (25) days prior to an election.

### **Deadline**

Statements must be submitted to the County Auditor no later than 4:30 p.m. thirty (30) days prior to an election. For the August 18, 2009 Primary, statements must

be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. July 17. For the November 3, 2009 General Election, statements must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. October 2.

### **General Election**

Candidates may submit a new statement prior to the General Election. The statement submitted for the Primary Voters' Guide would be republished for the General Election Voters' Guide for candidates that do not submit a new statement.